PART V. EIGHT PAGES.

WHAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT WILSON AND HUGHES

DEING over twenty-one, and having read aloud, to the satisfaction of my grocer, who is also registration clerk, five words from the middle of a sentence in the Constitution of the United States, I am what is known as a "legal voter." Upon me, and other legal voters, is conferred the privilege of electing a President to preside over the destiny of the country for four years, a decision entailing more than passing responsibility. What do I know about the candidates?

the Man." or "Wilson: the Statesman." lucky candidate. I admit that I have.

THE WRITER OF THESE LINES TAKES AN INVENTORY OF HIS MENTAL STOCK.

And yet an analysis of the wealth of facts from which I have drawn this decision, a decision worth one precious vote on a question of serious importance, is alarming enough to start a panic in mental circles. I am not proud. I will disclose all that I know about the two Presidential candidates. In so doing I will not consult newspaper files or Readers' Hand Books, neither will I make myself out more ignorant than I am. I will just put down what I actually know on the subject.

By way of autobiography, let me say that I have been to college, and that I read at least three newspapers a day and get as far as the third article in each of two weekly digests. I also look at the pictures in the English illustrated

Mr. Hughes, as the challenger, comes first under the pitiless lens of my political perception.

I have heard of Mr. Hughes for a great many years, and always has he been spoken of favorably. I once heard the son of Mr. Barnes, of Albany, com-

Opinions hitherto mumbled in the home circle as a test of their power are now being spoken openly and with conviction, enhanced in style and fortified in decisiveness by quotations from editorials and special asticles on "Hughes: Almost all of us have decided on the



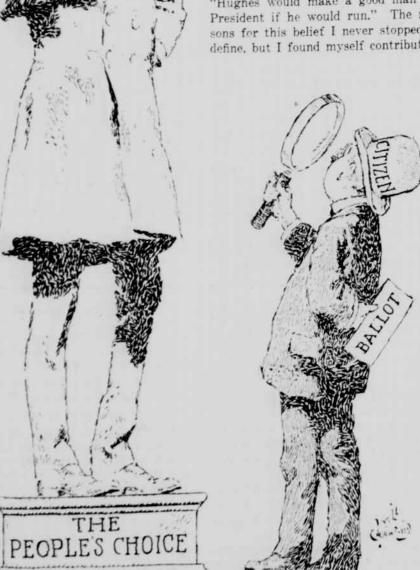
fered with "the manly sport of horseracing," but I can hardly say that this broke the continuity of Mr. Hughes's good record in my estimation. I think of him as a "good man." Of the insurance investigation in which his name first became famous I

remember none of the details, except that he found things in a bad way and did something drastic. If somebody should confront me with the assertion. made with any show of authority, that Mr. Hughes had really nothing to do with the insurance investigation, I could do nothing but concede the point.

THE WRITER DISCLOSES HIS IN-MOST REASONS FOR THINK-ING WELL OF MR. HUGHES.

Of his administration as Governor of New York I have no clear-cut impression, except that it was generally conceded that he was "a good Governor. I was not a resident of New York State at the time, and my views on Governor Hughes were formed from current cartoons and special articles, only the faintest impression of which I still re-

During the period between his Governorship and his retirement from the bench I shared in an echoing way that general undertone of opinion that "Hughes would make a good man for President if he would run." The reasons for this belief I never stopped to define, but I found myself contributing



By ROBERT C. BENCHLEY



it as a gem of personal conversation to any political convention-that is, unless some one else contributed it first. It seemed to be almost a truism, the reply to which was, "That's right, but I don't believe he'll ever run"; a statement which also went unchallenged.

Of Mr. Hughes's record as a Supreme Court Justice I know nothing, except that he behaved in an orderly manner in the courtroom and was never under suspicion of receiving a bribe. I do not know the decisions behind which he stood, neither do I know those against which he dissented. I remember once reading of a case in which Justice Hughes's name was mentioned editorially as either concurring or dissenting. I forget which, and I thought at the time that here was an indication of how he felt on the subject of something or other as a whole. It is unfortunate that I do not remember what the issue in the case

So, when it came time to accept Mr. Hughes as the Republican candidate I was faced with my ready-made conviction that he "would make a good man for President if he would run," a conviction, as has been shown, based on nothing more convincing than is my general impression that Kitchener was a silent man, or that the climate of California is delightful, I never having been west of Duluth. For all I knew, or for all I know at this moment, Mr. Hughes has an entirely opposite theory of life and government to that which I have painfully evolved as my own.

From Mr. Hughes's campaign speeches I have gleaned but little. I learn that he is in favor of America as an institution, and I fear that he is also in favor of it as a campaign slogan. From little hints he has dropped from time to time in his tour I gather that he does not think that Mr. Wilson has handled affairs well, but I can find no statement of how he himself would have handled them, other than the more or less general promise that he would have handled them more satisfactorily.

In short, so far as I personally can bring to mind, there is nothing about Mr. Hughes which especially recommends him to my vote for President, except that feeling which recommended a certain brand of yarn to my grandmother, inspired because "the advertisements speak so highly of it."

This, added to the fact that Mr. Hughes is a member of the national fraternity to which I belong, makes him, by a shade, my choice for President.

In considering Mr. Wilson I am not so much in the dark as regards actual accomplishments, but, owing to an abysmal ignorance of their real significance and actual workings, my opinion of their value is on a par with my opinion of the value of the new anemometer installed on the roof of the Weather Bureau.

I remember that when Mr. Wilson first became President I felt that he made a mistake in appointing Mr. Redfield as Secretary of Commerce over Mr. Brandeis. I knew nothing against Mr. Redfield, but I didn't like his looks, and I did approve of Mr. Brandeis, and for much the same reasons that I approve of Mr. Hughes.

Furthermore, I had heard from various sources of Mr. Wilson's unpleasantness at Princeton, and, although I was absolutely ignorant of the issues in that academic feud, I considered that he was in the wrong and that he was a very self-willed and disagreeable sort of per-

The first two years of his Administration, however, did much to find favor for him in my eyes. He went about revising the tariff as he had promised, and, in an incredibly short time, as the legislative snail flies, he had it revised. I can remember no particular schedules in the bill that seemed wise or otherwise to me then. I was living at the time in Massachusetts, where I saw strong men weep when discussing the question and heard anathemas against Mr. Wilson as frequent and strident as the newsboys' cries, but, aside from the impression that there had been nothing to equal it since the great smallpox epidemic of 1847, the Underwood tariff was nothing more to me than the curling sheet of parchment represented in the cartoons. And, in secret lest I lose my position with the manufacturing house, I liked the expedition with which it had been

Mr. Wilson said that he would next. with your kind attention, fix up the banking system, and he proceeded to fix it up. Here I am even more in the dark than on the tariff, for I know nothing about banking and nothing about the Federal Reserve act, except that it established some Federal Reserve Banks, over one of which a friend of my father's was appointed. But I count that move as one in Mr. Wilson's favor.

Then a Federal Trade Board was promised, and a Federal Trade Board was created. I think that I have the title correctly? I cannot think of anything that the Federal Trade Board has done, but I guess that it is a good thing. or I should have heard some one complaining about it.

Then came the war and Mexico. Perhaps here I am not fairly representative of the average voter, who finds his chief argument against Mr. Wilson in this period of "national disgrace." I have not found in the President's course, vacillating as it sometimes seemed, sufficient stimulus to arouse in me a resolve to turn him out of office. Neither do I think that in it he has put forward his chief proof of fitness. I have not winced under the insults to our national honor so much as have some. Neither was I moved to take twelve hours in passing a reviewing stand as a rebuke to Mr. Wilson's delay in arming the nation. Perhaps I have had more sympathy with

Thus, my chief complaint against the Wilson Administration is its appointments. If I were working up a debate I could probably unearth more proofs to back up this accusation. But, as I am merely going to cast a vote, I will let it go at that.

In the recent "high-handed" (all three papers that I read called it "high-handed") action in regard to the eight-hour law I somehow feel that something was wrong again with Mr. Wilson. I would liken his attitude in this matter to his attitude in the Princeton affair, if I knew what his attitude in the Princeton affair was. And if I continue to hear from all sides the condemnation of this bill that I have so far heard, I shall have to shift the major count against Mr. Wilson from appointments to this "highhanded" action against the railroads and the principle of arbitration. Also I shall have to read the bill.

FINALLY, THE WRITER SUMS UP WHAT HE KNOWS AND WHAT HE DOESN'T.

This brings the issue down to the following points: On the one hand, Mr. Wilson, who has accomplished many things, the value of which I am unable to judge; who has made mistakes which I am not sure are mistakes, and who has committed some grave errors, many of which I cannot remember at the mo-

On the other hand, there is Mr. Hughes, whose actual accomplishments and real views are an unknown quantity to me, but who has always been spoken well of and who is a member of my fraternity. Furthermore, I know his son slightly.

I had, therefore, decided to vote for Mr. Hughes, but, fortunately, perhaps, for the integrity of our electoral system, I find that I have not lived long enough in this state to be entitled to vote at all in November. And, by the time the next Presidential election comes 'round, I will have made it a point to look more carefully into the situation.

Or, better yet, I may be running for President myself.

THE WRITER RELIEVES HIS MIND ON THE SUBJECT OF DEMO-CRATIC APPOINTMENTS.

his handling of the Mexican situation.

because I realize that his course, with

all its mistakes and hedging, is almost

exactly the course that I feel I should

have followed had I been confronted

with the problem. This is not meant as

praise for the course. It explains why

I am not enraged at Mr. Wilson.

Cartoons by WILL CRAWFORD

In the matter of appointments I consider that the Administration has fallen down. I have heard ever so many people say so, and, at times, I have worked out examples of it. I do not recollect a host of them at present, but, if pressed, would name Messrs. Bryan, Sharp and Pindel. The last named was never really an appointee, as I remember, but threatened. As a matter of fact, I know of no reason why he shouldn't have made an excellent diplomat, except for the fact that the papers made considerable jesting over the fact that he came from Peoria, making possible the alliterative gibe: "Mr. Pindel of Peoria." This, of course, was bad.

As for Mr. Sharp, I base my indictment of him on the testimony of several Americans (Republicans) who have lived in Paris, and who say that Mr. Sharp's command of French is not so finished as that of Messrs. Bacon and

And Mr. Bryan-well, everybody admits that his appointment was a mistake, and that he filled the service with "deserving Democrats."

